UNITED NATIONS **DP**

Executive Board of the United Nations Development Programme and of the United Nations Population Fund

Distr.
GENERAL

DP/FPA/1996/2
24 November 1995

ORIGINAL: English

First regular session 1996
15-19 January 1996, New York
Item 12 of the provisional agenda
UNFPA

UNITED NATIONS POPULATION FUND

FUTURE ROLE OF UNFPA IN ASSESSING AND MEETING THE UNMET NEEDS FOR CONTRACEPTIVES AND THE REQUIREMENTS FOR LOGISTICS MANAGEMENT

Report of the Executive Director

1. This report has been prepared in response to decision 95/21, in which the Executive Board took note of the UNFPA report on the Global Initiative on Contraceptive Requirements and Logistics Management Needs of Developing Countries in the 1990s contained in document DP/1995/24/Part II; authorized the Executive Director to make appropriate arrangements, in the context of UNFPA's intercountry programme, for the continuation of the Global Initiative beyond 1995; and requested the Executive Director to submit to the Executive Board at its first regular session in 1996 a report containing a reappraisal of the future role of the United Nations Population Fund in assessing and meeting unmet needs for contraceptives and the requirements for logistics management.

2. The Executive Board, at its third regular session, 11-15 September 1995, approved the UNFPA intercountry programme, 1996-1999, which included a proposal for continuing the

/...

activities of the Global Initiative by funding two professional and one support staff over the four-year period (decision 95/37).

3. This report provides a brief review of the achievements to date of the Global Initiative -- one of the Fund's primary mechanisms for assessing the unmet needs for contraceptives and the requirements for logistics management -- and outlines the new directions for the proposed Global Initiative over the next four years.

I. THE GLOBAL INITIATIVE 1990-1995

4. Since its inception in 1990, the Global Initiative has accomplished a number of significant tasks. It has now completed in-depth studies in 11 countries (Bangladesh, Brazil, Egypt, India, Mexico, Nepal, Pakistan, Philippines, Turkey, Viet Nam, and Zimbabwe); a twelfth study on Nigeria was not completed because of a national strike. These studies estimated the status of the countries' contraceptive requirements and logistics management needs, as well as projecting their requirements and needs over the next 10 years. The in-depth studies also assessed the role of NGOs and the private sector in contraceptive delivery; reviewed local production options; estimated condom requirements for HIV/AIDS prevention; and conducted a financial analysis of the sources and uses of funds for acquiring contraceptive commodities.

5. The studies, which were organized by the staff of the Global Initiative, were conducted with the full cooperation of national authorities and with the active involvement of a national counterpart organization. Collaboration with bilateral and multilateral agencies and non-governmental organizations was also a hallmark of the studies. These included the World Health Organization (WHO), the World Bank and several governmental organizations -- the Australian Agency for International Development (AusAID), the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA), the Swedish International Development Authority (SIDA), the British Overseas Development Administration (ODA), and the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), as well as several non-governmental organizations (NGOs) working in the area of population -- the International Planned Parenthood Federation (IPPF), The Population Council and The Rockefeller Foundation.

6. One important aspect of the in-depth studies was to provide for a follow-up process. The conclusions and recommendations of each study are presented to and discussed with the Government prior to the team's departure. This facilitates the development of a consensus on the recommendations and provides the basis on which to implement any recommendations. For

example, in Nepal, a follow-up action focused on strengthening the logistics management system. By monitoring stock balances and consumption patterns, Nepal was able to achieve better distribution of contraceptive commodities, and the utilization of private-sector transportation helped to ensure improved contraceptive supply and availability at all service outlets. In Pakistan, various new approaches were instituted including: testing condoms; conducting a regular review of contraceptive stocks; carrying out audits to prevent commodity leakages; conducting a special survey on the use of intra-uterine devices (IUDs); initiating feasibility studies for IUD and condom manufacturing; and streamlining procedures for contraceptive procurement and distribution. In the Philippines, UNFPA provided an injectable contraceptive. In Turkey, plans were made to strengthen commodity forecasting and the logistics management system as well as to improve quality assurance. In Viet Nam, a number of steps were taken to improve the management information system for monitoring and evaluating family planning programmes. In Zimbabwe, the study helped clarify whether the local production of contraceptives was feasible in that country, and the long-term forecast provided the basis for the Government's request to UNFPA for injectable contraceptives.

7. A number of other Governments are conducting similar exercises. Studies have been conducted in Haiti and the Dominican Republic with the technical collaboration of the secretariat of the Global Initiative; and reports on these two countries will be published shortly. In India, an update study has already been completed, and its report will also be published shortly. A similar study will soon begin in Morocco.

8. Under the auspices of the Global Initiative, a number of technical reports have been published and disseminated. These include:

(a) A report entitled *Contraceptive Needs and Logistics Management*, which summarized the technical papers and the proceedings of the Consultative Meeting held in New York in May 1991;

(b) The reports of in-depth studies on contraceptive requirements and logistics management needs conducted in a number of countries;

(c) *Contraceptive Procurement: Options for Programme Managers*. This contraceptive procurement handbook was initially developed by the Program for Appropriate Technology in Health (PATH) with USAID involvement and has also been translated into French and Spanish;

(d) *Contraceptive Use and Commodity Costs in Developing Countries, 1994-2005*, an update of global estimates for contraceptive requirements and costs;

(e) *The Global Initiative on Contraceptive Requirements and Logistics Management Needs: Lessons and Methodologies*. This report presents highlights of major lessons learned from the in-depth studies, methods of forecasting contraceptive requirements, and a step-by-step guide for conducting an in-depth study. This report will be a useful resource for countries that wish to carry out studies on their contraceptive requirements and logistics managements needs;

(f) *Donor Support for Contraceptive Commodities*, an initial report on the development of a database detailing available resources. The aim of this database is to establish a practical and useful repository of information on donated contraceptive commodities, including condoms for HIV/AIDS prevention. An important function of the database is to facilitate and encourage coordination and cooperation among donor agencies and between donor agencies and Governments in the area of contraceptive requirements. The collation of this information will assist in the identification of needs and in the monitoring of global trends.

9. The Global Initiative has thus assisted many developing countries in better assessing and estimating their contraceptive requirements and strengthening their contraceptive logistics systems. It has also raised general awareness of the increasing global requirement for contraceptive commodities and of the need to strengthen logistics management systems. These issues will continue to provide the basis for the future activities of the Global Initiative.

II. FUTURE ACTIVITIES OF THE GLOBAL INITIATIVE

10. The Global Initiative has an important role to play in the coming years, including inter alia: monitoring follow-up action plans as suggested by the in-depth studies; providing technical assistance in countries for making logistics systems more efficient and cost-effective; organizing training in logistics management and contraceptive forecasting; publishing technical reports; assisting countries in conducting in-depth studies; and disseminating information on contraceptive needs and supply throughout the world.

11. Outlined below are some of the immediate follow-up actions and new directions proposed for the next four years (1996-1999).

Medium-term follow-up to the in-depth studies

12. It has been envisaged that three to four years after the completion of each in-depth study an in-country review of the original findings and recommendations will be undertaken. The projection of contraceptive requirements and logistics management needs will be updated, as appropriate, taking into account the actual volume of contraceptives required during the period and other interim developments. The UNFPA Country Director will be advised to develop a follow-up action plan in conjunction with the Government, in-country donors and, as appropriate, representatives of NGOs and the private sector. The follow-up action plan will provide a specific time-frame and a clear designation of responsibilities in order to implement the recommendations of the in-depth study. Where feasible the follow up study will be integrated with other exercises such as Programme Review and Strategy Development (PRSD) missions, and technical review missions carried out by UNFPA Country Support Teams (CSTs).

Technical assistance and training in logistics management and forecasting

13. The in-depth studies have revealed a great need to develop the national capacity of many developing nations in assessing and meeting their unmet needs for contraceptives. This can be achieved by improving logistics management systems and by refining contraceptive forecasting techniques. In order to improve programmatic impact and to ensure the regular and uninterrupted supply of contraceptives in the right place at the right time and in the right quantity, it is essential to have a good storage, inventory, ordering, distribution and management information system in place to enable effective management of the logistics system. Strengthening technical advisory services and training in logistics management and forecasting techniques will thus be a high priority of the Global Initiative. The Global Initiative will develop and implement a set of activities that will include the development of training modules; the organization of training courses using experts from both developed and developing countries; and continued backstopping provided by logistic management advisers on the CSTs.

In-depth studies

14. Increasing demand for contraceptive commodities and the continuous need to strengthen logistics management systems are likely to stimulate a number of countries to carry out in-depth studies of their own over the next four years. The expertise and capacity that UNFPA has developed in carrying out the in-depth studies to date and other related activities will serve as a valuable resource in advising countries that wish to carry out such studies in the future.

Contraceptive commodity database

15. Further work will be undertaken to develop and refine the database on donor support for contraceptive commodity provision to developing countries. The collation of this information will assist in the identification of needs and in the monitoring of global trends. The Global Initiative will continue to develop and refine the contraceptive commodity database to include both retrospective and prospective data on contraceptive supplies. The feasibility of collecting information on nationally produced and procured contraceptives will be explored. Use of the database will further facilitate the planning of future support for contraceptives, both for unmet family planning needs and for HIV/AIDS prevention.

Coordinated approach

16. In addition to those specific activities, the Global Initiative will work closely with UNFPA's Procurement Unit and with the proposed Global Contraceptive Commodity Programme (see DP/FPA/1996/3) once established. UNFPA would create an in-house global procurement management team comprising the staff of the Global Initiative and the UNFPA Procurement Unit. This team would work closely with geographical and technical divisions in UNFPA and with outside partners. The team would thus help ensure a more comprehensive and coordinated approach to assessing and projecting contraceptive commodity needs and strengthening logistics management systems, particularly through the building of national capacity.

IV. ELEMENTS FOR A DECISION

17. The Executive Board may wish to:

(a) Take note of the report as contained in DP/FPA/1996/2;

(b) Endorse the proposed future activities of the Global Initiative;

(c) Request the Executive Director to submit a progress report on the activities of the Global Initiative as part of her annual report.